

# Jim Barker Defends His Childishness

By [fitsnews](#) • on June 9, 2009



Clemson President James Barker is once again on the defensive after one of his staffers unwittingly exposed some of the manipulative practices being employed by the school in its “Fatal Attraction”-style quest to become a Top 20 public university - at least in the eyes of *U.S. News & World Report*.

FITS has [previously exposed](#) how Clemson has altered every facet of its operations to conform to the specific *U.S. News* ranking criteria, which has many questioning whether or not the school is still serving its mission as a publicly-funded, land grant institution.

Now, in the wake of an [embarrassing report](#) from *Inside Higher Ed* - which was 100% self-inflicted, incidentally - Barker is scurrying to defend why he gave Clemson artificially high ratings on a “peer assessment form” that comprises part of the *U.S. News* rankings.

From the latest [Inside Higher Ed](#) report:

Barker ... rated his institution as “strong” — but he gave no other university in the country that high a mark, handing out 18 “good”s (3’s), 94 “adequate”s (2’s), 126 “marginal”s, and 21 “don’t know”s in the 2009 ranking. Because *U.S. News*’s “national universities” category includes not only well-regarded public institutions such as the Universities of California at Berkeley, Michigan, and North Carolina at Chapel Hill, but also private universities such as Harvard, Stanford, and Yale, Barker has rated his institution more highly than all of those.

In an interview Monday, he defended his approach. “The request from *U.S. News* is to measure the academic quality of undergraduate programs,” Barker said. “It did not say research programs, it did not say prestige. It did not say size of endowments, or anything other than undergraduate education. And I took that charge seriously, measuring what I would think would be the full package of the undergraduate experience.”

What?

Frankly, a simple “yeah, I did it” would have sufficed, but Barker is hell-bent on defending his juvenile attempt to artificially inflate Clemson’s scores.

How pathetic.

This guy is an embarrassment to Clemson, to the State of South Carolina and to higher education in general.

**Update** - Sources tell FITS that Barker has sent out another one of his excuse-riddled “Dear Clemson” letters in response to the *Inside Higher Ed* report ... we’re endeavoring to get a copy of that for you, so stay tuned.

In the meantime, if you want to see a newspaper perform fellatio on a public official, here’s [La Liberland’s take](#) on Barker’s duplicity.

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